

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

1412

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[Government Code § 19572 \(m\)](#)

No employee shall be subject to, and the Department policy prohibits, unprofessional conduct by anyone for any reason. Unprofessional conduct has many forms and may include, but is not limited to, conduct that harms the integrity of the Department; lying, distorting or omitting the truth; improper practical joking and hazing that may or may not involve nudity; comments or conduct relating to genitalia; the use of demeaning, derogatory and humiliating terms or remarks, insults, and epithets; abusive or profane language; or actions that sabotage, humiliate or degrade an employee or his/her work performance that have the effect of creating an unprofessional and/or disruptive work environment. The question of whether the conduct is offensive is judged from the perspective of the recipient, rather than the intention of the perpetrator.

Unprofessional conduct does not have to be associated with a protected characteristic to violate policy. Unprofessional conduct that is not related to a protected characteristic will be handled administratively through the appropriate management levels. One act of unprofessional conduct may constitute a violation of this policy.

These activities may constitute discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). They also may be prohibited under Government Code Section 19570, et. al. Moreover, they are prohibited under CAL FIRE policy. Such activities are unprofessional and inappropriate and violate both CAL FIRE's Rules of Conduct and this policy section. Employers have business related reasons and legal incentives for addressing and correcting unprofessional conduct at its earliest stages.

[\(see Next Section\)](#)

[\(see Handbook Table of Contents\)](#)

[\(see Forms and Form Samples\)](#)